

UP TO DATE

SPORTING NEWS AND COMMENT

EDITED BY
ROBERT EDGREN.

LUCKY WINGED FOOT GOES TO ATHENS WITH ATHLETES

Emblem Worn by Tommy Burke in Greek Games Ten Years Ago the Mascot of American Team That Sails To-Morrow.

BY ROBERT EDGREN.

To-morrow is the great day. To-morrow the American team sails at last for Athens. The weeks of hard training and preparation have passed. The men are fit and eager. Their muscles are ready for the strain. Their nerves are on edge.

There is no "manana" about this—the Spanish to-morrow that never comes.

In less than twenty-four short hours the Barbarossa's great engines will begin to move, her bronze propellers will churn the North River into foam. She will slide gently away from the long rows of piers, move majestically through the maze of tugs and ferry-boats, answer their salutes with whistle and turn her nose seaward.

The crowded piers will speed the departing athletes with cheers and flag waving. The little tugs will toot and siren. Sirens will rend the air.

From the Barbarossa's deck thirty American athletes will look back at the land they are going out to fight for. They will see the flags and the crowds blurring into one indistinct distant mass. The cheer will come over the water like faint frogs croaking. The din of sirens and tog whistles will die out into silence. New York, with its countless flags mastheaded on its tall buildings, will flatten down on the sky line. The Narrows will be passed, and so will the long line of buoys that mark the ship channel leading down toward Sandy Hook. At last the smoke of the far-away city, the confused haze of distant hills, the yellow sand beaches, will all melt away into the clouds of the horizon.

The open sea will lie before us. Beyond that—Athens, the joy of conflict, fame and victory we hope.

American Public Interested.

But not all the enthusiasm has been reserved for to-morrow. Of course, the whistles will not be blown until then. To-day the tugs will not escort any other steamer out toward the narrow panting and puffing and tooting their sirens. The flags will not decorate all the dignitaries, and Hoboken ferries won't carry crowds to the starting point. There are other kinds of enthusiasm for to-day.

Some people show their interest in the American team by writing letters. A few hundreds of these letters have come into the Evening World office.

There are letters from the police and letters from the boys' luck. Some will include lucky tokens. The rabbit-foot crop can grow heavy. Foot-leaved sunflowers have been planted in the sporting editor's garden. He has had a few good sorts of suggestions for the greatest athletic honor there is.

And that winged foot is going to have another chance to bring him good luck. Tom Burke has been kind enough to send it to me. I'm not the greatest athlete in America, which is freely admitted. I'm just going over there, the others are the ones I care about. It's my turn to win, and if it isn't I'll come near winning as I can.

Some will score points and some won't, but every man will try. And I intend to do my best to help Tommy Burke carry this old victorious emblem of his across the finish line ahead of all the rest of the world.

My Dear Elgent:

"I am going to lend you a good-luck charm for the Olympic games."

Ten years ago Tom Burke was the

inclosed winged foot at Athens. As he went several events, I think it will bring success to you and the whole American team.

Burke gave me the foot immediately after his return, and I have had it in my possession ever since, so it is not a "phony" one.

Wishing you bon voyage and looking forward to your account of the games.

Yours,

MYRON TOWNSEND."

Burke Carried It to Victory.

Carefully folded into the envelope was an old, faded winged-foot emblem of the New York Athletic Club. The bright red has turned to a maroon now. The white switches that make the feathers in the wing and tail gray with age are gone. The leather sole and heel and brand along its borders give it a ragged appearance. But think of the scenes this old emblem has witnessed.

Carried on the packhorse that went out of the great, mud-splattered tunnel American ever knew, this winged foot dashed over the finish line in that huge stadium ten years ago when the ancient Greek games were first reviewed.

Twenty years ago, seven years ago, and so will the long line of buoys that mark the ship channel leading down toward Sandy Hook. At last the smoke of the far-away city, the confused haze of distant hills, the yellow sand beaches, will all melt away into the clouds of the horizon.

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